

Are your high-risk patients vaccinated against hepatitis B, as recommended by the CDC?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that adults at risk for hepatitis B, as well as other adults seeking protection, should be vaccinated against the hepatitis B virus. Among those at risk are¹:

- Persons with diabetes mellitus
- Persons with chronic liver disease
- Persons sexually at risk

Diabetes and hepatitis B

- Those with diabetes can be at increased risk for hepatitis B if they share diabetic supplies, such as blood glucose meters, finger-stick devices, and insulin syringes or pens, with an infected person²
- Of the 29 outbreaks of hepatitis B in long-term care facilities since 1996, 25 of these outbreaks involved adults with diabetes receiving assisted blood glucose monitoring³
- In a 2009-2010 Emerging Infections Program report, people ages 23 to 59 with diabetes had approximately twice the odds of developing acute hepatitis B infection compared with those without diabetes⁴
- In a 1999-2010 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), the prevalence of hepatitis B infection was 60% higher in noninstitutionalized adults diagnosed with diabetes compared with those without diabetes⁵

The CDC recommends vaccination against hepatitis B for adults with diabetes ages 19-59 as soon as feasible after diagnosis; adults with diabetes age 60 or older, at the discretion of the healthcare provider.¹

Chronic liver disease and hepatitis B

- Chronic liver disease is not a risk factor for the development of hepatitis B; however, persons with chronic liver disease who develop hepatitis B have a higher rate of mortality and morbidity

Sexual risk and hepatitis B

Persons sexually at risk for hepatitis B infection include¹:

- Persons having sex with an infected partner
- Persons with multiple sex partners (more than 1 sex partner during the previous 6 months)
- Men who have sex with men
- Persons seeking evaluation or treatment for a sexually transmitted disease (STD)

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Other persons at risk for hepatitis B

Other persons at risk for hepatitis B infection include¹:

- Users of illegal injection drugs
- Healthcare and public safety workers exposed to blood on the job
- Persons with end-stage renal disease
- Persons with HIV
- Residents and staff of facilities for developmentally disabled persons
- International travel to areas where hepatitis B is common
- Household contacts of infected persons

Despite the CDC's recommendations, hepatitis B vaccination coverage in the US has been low.⁷ The 2012 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) reported that an estimated 35.3% of adults ages 19 to 49, 28.6% of adults age 19 or older with diabetes, and 15.1% of adults age 60 or older with diabetes were vaccinated (≥3 doses) against hepatitis B.⁷

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases*. Atkinson W, Wolfe S, Hamborsky J, eds. 12th ed., second printing. Washington, DC: Public Health Foundation; 2012. <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/index.html>. 2. Diabetes and hepatitis B vaccination. Information for diabetes educators. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/hepb_vaccination.pdf. Published October 2012. Accessed July 14, 2014. 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Use of hepatitis B vaccination for adults with diabetes mellitus: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). *MMWR*. 2011;60(50):1709-1711. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6050.pdf>. Accessed July 14, 2014. 4. Reilly ML, Schillie SF, Smith E, et al. Increased risk of acute hepatitis B among adults with diagnosed diabetes mellitus. *J Diabetes Sci Technol*. 2012;6(4):858-866. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3440157/pdf/dst-06-0858.pdf>. Accessed July 14, 2014. 5. Schillie SF, Xing J, Murphy TV, Hu DJ. Prevalence of hepatitis B virus infection among persons with diagnosed diabetes mellitus in the United States, 1999-2010. *J Viral Hepat*. 2012;19(9):674-676. http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/769339_print. Accessed July 14, 2014. 6. Keffe EB. Hepatitis A and B superimposed on chronic liver disease: vaccine-preventable diseases. *Trans Am Clin Climatol Assoc*. 2006;117:227-238. 7. Williams WW, Lu PJ, O'Halloran A, et al. Noninfluenza vaccination coverage among adults – United States, 2012. *MMWR*. 2014;63(05):95-102. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6305.pdf>. Accessed July 11, 2014.

Many adults in the US have not been vaccinated against hepatitis B and may be at risk.

Talk with your at-risk patients about hepatitis B vaccination.



This material was developed by GSK.

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